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Helme () the Elder
THE
METHOD
OF
GOOD PREACHING,
Being the Advice
OF A
FRENCH Reform'd Minister
TO HIS
SON.

Translated out of *French*, into *English*.

2 Tim. 2. xv. Study to shew thy self approved
unto God, a Work-Man that needs not to be
asham'd, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.

LONDON,

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Stocks-Market. 1701.

THE
METHOD
OF
GOOD PREACHING

Being the Advice
OF A
FRENCH RECTOR, MINISTRE
OF HIS



Translated out of French into English

By J. B. R. (The French Rector) is here the first time
into English a French Rector's advice to be
of great use to the English Clergy.

For LONDON

Printed by J. B. R. and are to be sold by
all the Booksellers in London and the
Shops of the University of Oxford.

TO HIS
HONOURED
AND
DEAR FRIEND,
Mr. JOHN DELM'E,
MERCHANT.

S I R,

Your near Relation to the judicious Author of the ensuing Papers, your humble imitation of his Christian Vertues, your uncommon respect to the Ministers of Jesus Christ, and the hand you have had in publishing this Discourse, Intitle you to this Dedication. 'Tis pity these remains of your excellent Father should lye *buried in the dark* for so long a time, and that so many should lose the benefit of 'em, who might have profited by them, to the greater edifying of the Church of God. 'Tis you that gives 'em a happy Resurrection, and I have, at your desire, exchang'd their *Grave Cloathes* for a more agreeable Dress. The Translation abounded with antiquated and obsolete Words, and with a Multitude of *Gallicisms*,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Gallicisms, which made it ungrateful, and, in some places, scarce intelligible to an *English* Reader. I have endeavour'd to Correct the most material of these, and that prov'd a more difficult Province than I was at first aware of.

However, I reckon my labour well bestow'd, if it pleases God to bless it to such as need such helps. May the Lord abundantly reward your work and labour of Love to his Gospel, and the despised Preachers of it. Your afflictive concern for the Decays and Distresses of the Reformed Churches, and your zealously charitable Endeavours to obviate the one, and to alleviate the other, will turn to a good Account in the day of Retribution. I commend you, and all yours, to God, and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among all them which are sanctified. I am,

Dear Sir,

Your very Affectionate,

and Obligated Friend

and Servant,

J. A. OWEN.

Salop. Decem. 30.

1720.

T H E

THE
PREFACE.

I Have, at the Instance of a worthy Friend, Revised the following Translation, which, I conceive, may be of great use to young Students. I highly approve the Christian Design of it, which is to exalt the Holy Scriptures, the only Book that can make the Man of God Perfect. Were that Divine Volume more Studied, and the great Patterns of useful Preaching, with which it accommodates us, more industriously imitated, the sacred Ministry wou'd soon recover its Authority over the Consciences of Men, and we shou'd find the blessed Effects of it in the Christian Church. The Learned and Pious Author shews himself an Experienced Master-Builder, and himself a wise Steward of the Mysteries of God. What he intended for the private use of One, is of common Concernment to All the Sons of the Prophets, who will thankfully embrace every thing that may contribute to the increase of that Wisdom, whereby they win Souls.

I have supplied a Quotation or two out of the French Discipline, which was defective in the Copy. It's pity the judicious Author's French Manuscript cannot be recover'd, that wou'd have help'd us to understand some Passages, which

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are not so clearly render'd in the Translation. These I have, as well as I cou'd, explain'd from the Contexture of the Discourse, and pursuant to the desires of his pious and very useful Son, have put several improper Expressions into a new form, Contracted, and Illustrated some prolix and obscure Paragraphs, and clear'd the Connexion in some places, where it seem'd perplex'd, and incoherent.

The exactness of Method which the Author recommends, is no less beneficial to the Minister than edifying to the People. The Disposition of Truths into their proper and natural order, gives the Mind a more grateful prospect of 'em, begets in us distinct and fixed Ideas, refreshes the invention, and greatly relieves the Memory, that admirable Treasury of Divine Virtues, out of which, a Scribe well furnished for the Kingdom of Heaven, may bring forth things New and Old, without being confined to his Notes, which, with some Application, may be retain'd, and deliver'd, with a freedom becoming an Ambassador of Jesus Christ. The want of a clear Method of a more inward acquaintance with the Scripture, and of impressive Meditation, by which we transcribe our Notes into our Minds, have no small influence upon the Modern English Practice of Reading Sermons.

It must be confest, that many Readers are very elaborate and exact in their Composures, but it were to be wish'd they wou'd take pains in Revising, as well as in Penning their Discourses: If they wou'd spend a small part of the time in chewing the Food that cost them so much Time in the preparing, they shou'd find it both strengthening to themselves, and nourishing to their Hearers. In the Primitive Church, Preaching and Reading so vastly differ'd, that the Readers were an order of the lower Clergy, inferiour to Presbyters. Reading of Sermons is scarce
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used any where in the Christian World at this Day, except here in England, and in the RUSSIANCHU RCH, where they are furnished with a set of Homilies, which are Read to the People, and this is all the Preaching they have. I have heard some Gentlemen, that are used to Reading, declare, that they could wish we had no other Sermons, but Printed Homilies. I am afraid the humour of Reading Sermons has contributed too much to this Opinion, and created in many, too great an indifferency for a practical and lively Ministry. Indeed, no Memory would be well able to retain other Mens Composures; so that there is a necessity of Reading 'em; But there is not the same Reason for Discourses of our own preparing, as all our Sermons ought to be, these being the Emanations of our Thoughts, and fresh in our Minds, are more easily laid up in the Memory, which by frequent using would grow stronger, and become more tenacious. as our thinking faculty grows effete and languid by disuse; so the Memory is enervated for want of exercise. It's far easier, and requires less pains and time to Copy out Sermons into the Memory, than to commit 'em to Writing. The scatter'd Effluvioms of an active Mind, may, without any great difficulty, be recollected by a steady and fixed Thought. The Original Design of writing Sermons, was to help, and not to destroy the Memory: It was not to supersede the use of it, but to enable it to do its Office with more ease and pleasure.

It would look very odd both in the Popish and Foreign Protestant Churches, to see a Preacher poring on his Notes all the while he speaks to the People, that he can scarce afford 'em now and then a glance off them, for fear of being at a loss.

Musculus speaks of a German Cardinal Bishop, who Preached Partim ex scheda, Partim ex instinctu suggesto-

ris quem a tergo habebat, partly by Reading his Notes, partly by the help of a Person that prompted some things to him behind his back: but his own Friends were heartily ashamed of him. Loc. De. Min. verb. p. 215.

Reading has many Inconveniencies attending it, which renders it very unadvisable to those that can do otherwise. It not only cramps our Thoughts, but deprives us of the aids of the Holy Spirit, which we have reason to expect in Preaching the Word.

We need his supplies, not only to suggest good Thoughts unto us in our preparations, but also in delivering our Message. The Gospel is the Ministration of the Spirit, by whose Inspiration it was given, and propagated through the World. He is still present with his Ministers to enlighten their Minds, to bring Divine Truths to their remembrance, and to give 'em freedom of speech in publishing the Holy Oracles. The Apostle was sensible of this benefit when he desired the Colossians to pray for him, that God would open to him a Door of utterance to speak the Mystery of Christ.

It's evident, that Reading of Sermons was not the practice of the Primitive Church, as might be prov'd by many instances out of the Fathers. We may judge of the Ancient way of Preaching, by that famous Story in the Life of Austin, who being once at a loss in his Sermon, digressed from his Subject, and spoke what first occur'd, which were some sudden Thoughts against the Manichees. This very digression, which he was guided to, by that Spirit that knows the Hearts of all Men, was blessed to the conversion of two Manichees that happen'd to be present at that time, tho' he knew nothing of 'em.

Pursuant to his Practice, he perswades Ministers to pray, as they are going to Preach, that they may be enabled to pour forth the living Waters which they have drunk, because,

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“ because, saith he, upon every Subject we handle, according to the Doctrine of the Faith and Love, many things may be said, and there are divers ways of expressing the same things, who can tell what may be most expedient for us to speak, or you to treat [but he who seeth the Hearts of all Men] And a little after he adds, Adhuc horam vero Dictionis, As he is going to Preach, let him consider the Words of Christ, Take no thought how, or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same Hour what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. If therefore the Holy Ghost speak in them who are persecuted for Christ, Why not in them also who Preach Christ. De. Doct. Christ, IV. XV.

Reading of Sermons usually wants much of the Life and Fervor which ought to accompany the Ministry of the Word, and which has a great influence on the success of our Labours. For the Divine Blessing is ordinarily dispensed according to the aptitude of means to their proper ends. An affectionate fervent delivery, caters, paribus, puts Life into the Hearers, and commands attention. It is said of Apollo, that being an eloquent Man, mighty in the Scriptures, and fervent in Spirit, he mightily convinced the Jews, Acts 18. Most Persons that have a serious concern for their Spiritual State, are for that Ministry that most affects the Heart. This defect of Life is observ'd in most Readers; and for this Reason many pious Hearers are often more prejudiced against Reading than they shou'd be, and in case of a Competition will prefer a weaker Minister that can Preach without using his Notes, to a more able Person that Reads his Sermons. It's some reproach to our Profession, that the Gentlemen of the Law shou'd be able to speak off hand with so much freedom.

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freedom and ease; and those who have equal advantages with em, for the improvement of their Minds should have so servile a dependence on their Notes. The reason of the difference is obvious; the one by using themselves to a masculine Freedom of Elocution, acquire a habit of speaking pertinently and closely to any studied Cause; the other by disguise dare not trust their Memories, nor can they express the most genuine Product of their deliberate Thoughts, without the assistance of a Paper Interpreter.

It is scarce to be hoped, that those who have for a long tract of Time undergone the Punishment of Reading should be able to free themselves of their accustom'd Fetters; but the younger Ministers may with a little exercise soon throw off their Crutches, and use the Abilities which Nature and Grace have furnished em with, for the Edification of the Church of Christ.

Resolution and Industry make difficult things easy and agreeable. Fixed Meditation, earnest Prayer, and a clear Natural Method, would soon retrieve the most useful and antient way of Preaching.

Meditation will both affect our Hearts, and impress holy Truths upon our Memories. Such things as enter by the Affections into the Memory, leave a sort of indelible Character upon it. The Evil that raffles our disgustful Passions, and the good that gratifies the other Emotions of the Soul, cannot easily be forgotten. 'Tis certain that Meditation begets Affection, and Affection begets Utterance. While the Prophet mus'd the Fire Burnt, and while his Heart was inditing a good Matter, his Tongue was the Pen a of ready writer.

Prayer is an excellent help to the Memory, for it not only engages the assistances of the Divine Remembrancer, but causes the Truths of the Gospel to take the deeper
Root

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Root in us. By converting the several Articles of a Discourse into proper Confessions, Petitions, and Praises, our Hearts are Transformed into the Image of 'em, and retain a sweet Savour of 'em, which will enable us to Communicate with more assurance unto others, what we have tasted and felt in our selves.

Method, which represents Truths in their Natural Order, Connexion and Dependency, greatly helps the retentive Powers of the Intellect, and this Benefit, among many others, the observant Reader will find by the following Discourse.

James Owen.

THE

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THE

THE
METHOD or SKILL
OF GOOD
PREACHING,
BEING

*The Advice of a French Minister to his Son,
when he was entring on the Ministry?
Translated out of the French, by a near
Relation. The Father and Son were Prea-
chers of the Word, in the French and
Walloon Reformed Churches, and both
are long since Dead.*

HE that desires to Preach well, should be careful to observe a good Method. In order hereunto, one needs not tie himself unto one and the very same Method, but should chuse that Method, that suits both to himself, and his Auditors best, as to his most usual way of Preaching; tho' he may and ought sometimes, to vary, and follow another Method, that may be more adapted to particular Occasions.

Prayer unto the Lord, is one of the best helps to find the most proper Method, either ordinary or extraordinary; yet nevertheless, the serious and attentive Consideration of the Subjects, and Matters to be treated on, and of the Persons to whom one is about to Preach, and likewise the Time when, and the Place where, is a great help, what Method to fix upon for the Edification of the Hearers.

Whether it be a Text of Scripture, or a Section of the Catechism, there must be a due Consideration had accordingly.

The Method in handling a Text, may be either *Cryptic* or Hidden, or the *Technick* and Artificial, which is most Plain.

I. The *Cryptic* or hidden, is that which mingles and conveys the Explication with the Application, as it falls out in the Discourse, which is made upon the principal Subject of the Text. By this the Text will be comprehended in one and the same Discourse, longer or shorter, and Explicated and Illustrated by that which hath been spoken briefly, and as it were by the way, and hath divers Reproofs, according to the intermingled Application, either with Exhortation or Redarguation, or with Consolation. And this may be without divisions or distributions, at least, not very distinct and clear ones; and sometimes it may fall out gracefully, when it is not from Ignorance, but with good judgment, and with Prudence: Then namely, when it is more requisite to reform than inform; and when one is rather to stir up the Affections, than to inform the judgments of one's Hearers.

And tho' this be not in the Artificial manner, yet it requires great skill to do it well in this manner, for it varies as the Occasion requires; and in this, *Arse est tegere Artem.*

Artem, as is said among the *Rhetoricians*: Which also is verified in the right practice of the Artificial; for although the Art may, and ought to appear the more, nevertheless it must not be with Affectation, and with Ostentation of terms of Art, but only by some necessity of Expressions, which ought to be explained. Some indeed do more esteem, and rather practice the *Cryptic Method*, because they fancy it hath the vein of an Orator, and gives fairer space for Eloquence. I do nevertheless conceive, that for the better grounding a People in Knowledge, and for the better moving the Affections, with more judgment, it is most expedient to use it, but very rarely; but more commonly it were better to use the Artificial Method.

Now this Artificial is diversly Practiced.

Some upon the reading of a Text, without any Entrance or Prologue, at least any material one, do presently fall upon a very short Explication of the principal Terms; if they do conceive that there is some difficulty in the Words; then they do make some Division or other, easy and plain, and so they gather the principal Instructions, or points of Doctrines which they conceive to flow from the Text: Afterwards they prove their point of Doctrine, by other passages of Scripture Examples, and by Reasons; and do add, for further Illustration, the several Uses they conceive ought to be made for Practice, against what is disagreeing to it, and for Excitement to what Duties the Subject requires. This Method seems to be the most familiar, and helpeth very much the Understanding of the most simple, and it serves greatly to help their Memory, the better to retain and repeat that which they have heard, and therefore it's much used amongst the best Assemblies of the *English*, which do most entirely desire it; yet if they condemn not the other Method

more Artificial, and not affected and subtle, I dare not condemn them, nor the Ministers who accommodate themselves to the capacity of their People. In this respect, this deserves praise rather than blame; also it facilitates the studies of Ministers, and it is a very great Advantage to them, for the Ministers Memory, as well as the People, so much the more, that it keeps always the same way, without any, or very little alteration.

2. Some Others, upon the reading of their Text, do make for Entrance, some ingenious Introduction to their Text, then they enter on a subtle (at least in their conceit) a curious Division of the Words more than of the Matter of their Text; afterwards do run over upon every word with some Observations, which they draw forth, and with as many Heads as they can, and so passing on such a Discourse, pointing at, and touching some Doctrines lightly, from one word to another, they leave in their Auditors Minds more of Admiration then of Edification. This Method seems to please those, who would seem to be more high raised Auditors than the common and ordinary: And principally, it pleases those, who do not love that their Covetousness and other Lusts should be too much touched, and reprov'd. For tho' sometimes they be most closely dealt withal, it is but by the by, and with some kind of delectation; their Ears are somewhat tickled: Yet if the Ministers do use it according to the exigence of their Auditors, and to take them, where they are most to be taken, I dare not reprehend them, so it be without Affectation, and without nourishing a People in affected Curiosities, but to bring them to the knowledge of themselves, to make them sensible that they are not so sufficient as they presume to be; and they be given to understand, they have need of the greatest Simplicity of the Word, for
their

their solid Edification, as well as others, in their Rank. For, to accustom one's Auditors in such a manner, that they are more and more distast'd with a more simple manner of Preaching, that they condemn the Method which does most of all Edifie; I judge, that this is a way of Preaching, which will more destroy than build the Church of God.

3. Some Others then, not undervaluing and despising the gifts of other Men, upon the reading of their Text, do, after some suitable Introduction, enter upon a *Paraphrase* (especially if their Text be not too long) and a Division of the parts of it; then passing over every part, do unfold them Solidly, and that in the most familiar manner, aiming more at the Matter than at the Words; and yet not neglecting the words neither; and that all of them one after another, with one continued Course, tho' with some convenient Transitions: Afterwards they will run over them one after another, in drawing from the Explication of every one, the principal Doctrines and Instructions, for to make some suitable Application; after having reasonably cleared them by Proofs, such Proofs which they judge most to purpose.

This Method is also solid and familiar, and can't but be (by the Blessing of God) of great Edification to tractable Hearers, who are such as desire to be well grounded in Knowledge, and to be effectually stirr'd up to the forsaking, or the doing that, which becomes all true Christians. Nevertheless there is this Inconveniency, which seems to arise necessarily from this Method; namely, That the exact and full Explication of all the parts, do leave the Auditors too long without the Application, and does not spare time enough for the most urgent Occasion and necessary Application, at least, in the hour allotted: but of necessity, some Application must be remitted.

remitted unto some other Times and Hour; in which time the Explication may be in part flipt out of the Memory, to the prejudice of a more strong Impression of the Application, which is of so much the more force and power, as it is groundd upon the clear light, which the true Explication brings; and if one should undertake to reiterate, and to repeat the Explication of the part, or parts, to be Applied, that may bring the Inconvenience of perplexity, or dwelling too long upon one Text.

4. Wherefore some Others following this Method, do vary only in this, That they do not open any more of the parts than they can apply in that hour; and even in opening the parts, which they handle and treat of in the hour, they'll apply in opening the most particular Doctrines of every part; but this they do but asby the by, before they come to the Explication then to be handled, namely, the Doctrines which do flow and result more immediately from the Explication of the Words, or the Phrases in the Text, with relation however unto the Subject of the unfolded parts; and they'll run over it with some proper Transition unto the following part; that having opened one part, and in opening applyed it, they proceed to a Second or Third, and perhaps also to a Fourth part, and then they'll come to a First, Second, or Third principal Doctrine, which results and arises from the opened parts conjoyned; and they'll apply their Subject according to the Necessity they find, and according to the Time they have to do it in: This Method thus proposd, does not much leave the Auditors without Application, and yet reserves for the last, and for the ending of the Discourse (as our dear and blessed Lord did reserve to the last his miraculous Wine, *John* 2.) the principal, the
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main, and the most pressing Application: Then in the following Exercises, they'll pursue likewise, and go on to the other following parts, which could not be finished at the first nor second time. I conceive this Method to be ordinarily the most profitable, because that at one space of Time, the Understanding, and Judgment, and the Affections, have the best means of Edification, and at every time (or very nigh) hath a new Text; or new Matter, for the thread of the Text discoursed of. And this variety may be wholly pleasing and agreeable. However it is impossible, that the most faithful Minister that is, can always use the same Method, but may and ought to vary his Method, as Discretion directs, according to the variety of the Text, which one may discern, observing these Directions.

1. For in the First place, some Texts are more easily understood, and the sense of them obvious to an intelligent, observing Reader; but there are others in which there is, according to St. *Peter*, *Things*, nay, Words *hard to be understood*: Unto the former, more brief Explication sufficeth; and it is in vain to heap many things, and to use many words to clear them; they are already clear in themselves: But for others, there must be a large Explication, to the clearing up as well of the Words, as of the Matter, and things contained in the Words; and it is better labouriously to draw out, in the first place, the true and full sense and meaning of the Spirit of God in them; taking it in the property of the true Words and Phrases, compared with like Scripture passages, and other circumstances, especially the Coherence and Scope of the Text in hand, than to go about to set forth at first the diversity of Interpretations, which the Antient and Modern Interpreters give upon the Text; for this commonly puzzles and embarrasses the minds of the Hearers,
and

and does pre-occupy and prejudice them against the Authority of the Scripture, as variable, according to several Mens Minds and Imaginations ; and begets in them an Opinion, that there is little force in such Scriptures against their Sins and Corruptions, and lessens their value for other Scriptures, since that divers Senses are thus given ; and that Opinion which strikes not at their Sins and Corruptions, will more readily be embraced. On the contrary, the true sense found out and expressed, and plainly demonstrated, as hath been said, doth not puzzle and distract the Mind, but gains and obtains room in the Heart, at first by its clear Evidence, and holy Simplicity, and so is of more Authority and Strength for the Truth, and for Vertue, against all Falshood and Sin. By having the true and more native Sense thus averred and demonstrated in the first place, one then may well infer from them, that then such and such Interpretation doth not agree with the parts of the words, and of the things therein proposed ; and it seems more expedient, in rejecting thus modestly the improper Interpretation, or the false and impertinent ones, not to name their Authors, least we may seem to insult and glory over them (especially if otherwise they are noted Men in the Antient and Modern Church) and to affect praises to our selves, by exposing others ; but we should aime and fortifie the honest Hearers, not to acquiesce in truths, or to follow the Virtues there Planted and held forth, out of a Spirit of Contradiction, under pretence that famous Authors think otherwise than the Preacher, in the Interpretation of that Passage, which in its most native Truth, strikes and combats with their Sins and Corruptions: Rather, if it be not with Affectation of being thought learned, one must alledge and name the Authors, which agree with the interpretation given, or some near to the most genuine
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and true Interpretation thus laid down: But whilst we name Antient and Modern Authors, we must take heed lest we may seem to Prejudice the Authority of the Holy Scriptures; and therefore, according to some Articles of the Discipline in the *French Churches*, we are strictly forbidden to use Authors in Preaching, except very rarely.

2. Of Texts, some are *Historical*, some *Prophetical*, some *Dogmatical*, some *Parabolical*.

1st, For the *Historical*. If they be clear in themselves, there needs not much insisting upon the Explication; but, after some fit Division of the principal Parts, with some Explication of some particulars, which may be apply'd in Explicating them, we may begin with the Doctrines, or Instructions which may proceed from every Particular in their Order. If they be too many in Number, and too much to finish at one Time, one may content himself with the chief of them, and the others at some other Time; especially if they be lively, and are not ordinarily met with. If the Historical Passages be either in the general, or in the particular of any part of them, hard to be understood, it is meet and convenient to follow the Advice, in the precedent distinction of the Passages more difficult to be understood; only if they be not Histories that concern the Substance of Religion, the diversity of Interpretations may better be admitted. It is to be observed, That after the deduction of the History in its Explication and Application, such as hath been said, some other Inferences of Spiritual Accomodation may be made, by way, either of Allegory, or of simple Allusion and Comparifon, in drawing forth Arguments and Instructions of things Spiritual and Eternal, from Temporal and Corporal Things, chiefly and principally, when the History of Things, or Per-

Persons hath expressely, or tacitly a Figure and Representation of Christ or Antichrist, and their Kingdoms; or the Church and People of God; or the Wicked and Hypocrites. But in these Spiritual Allegories, the Application must be very Sober and Discreet, and the surest way is to make no more than Scriptures gives Foundation for, and does clearly discover, or by some such allusions and comparisons as they give warrant for; so that as it is said of Bodily Cures which our Lord wrought, it was that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, *Mat. 8. 17. He hath taken, and born our Griefs.* It follows, That we may and ought to apply the Histories, of so many Bodily Cures unto Spiritual; thus, as there are in the Old Testament, divers Typical Histories, as that of the *Brazen Serpent*, John 3. *Of David*, of *Solomon*; and so of Shadows in the Sacrifices and legal Ceremonies: So in the New Testament there are Histories of Christ in the Evangelists, which may and ought to be Spiritually applyed; and as in divers Histories there is a report to be made of the Temporal Benefits and Mercies of God towards his Antient People, unto the Spiritual Mercies and Benefits, which we receive under the New Testament, (not with some Anabaptists, to exclude the faithful of the Old Testament from the Spiritual Benefits shadowed by the Bodily Mercies) as in the deliverance out of *Ægypt*, in the Preface to the Decalogue: So there is a report to be made of the Corporal Judgments inflicted upon the Rebellious, unto the Spiritual and Eternal Judgments to come upon the Souls of the Rebels, against the Gospel, in the New Testament; for thus does the Apostle argue, *1 Cor. Chap. 10.* And even *Heb. 10.* He Argues from the least to the greatest Punishment. And what is the Revelation of *St. John*, but a continual issue of Things, and Persons, as also, of the Blessings and Plagues of the Old Testament, in its Histories, Mystically and Spiritually brought in,

unto

unto the Things and Persons, Blessings and Plagues; under the New Testament? Therefore every faithful Minister, in handling these Histories, may draw out Spiritual Things, conformable unto the Temporal, not attributing divers Senses; but in taking these Historical Texts in their full Sense; which being from the infinite Spirit of God, no marvel that it is profound, and much deeper than the Sea in its depths. And tho' by searching the Scriptures, and an humble Application to God, for his teaching Spirit, many Truths may be discovered, yet there remains a great deal out of view, for the exercise of the Industry of those that come after us. So profound is the Word, that when one hath spoken, and another is silent, another may yet have something, which may be revealed unto him to profit withal; All may have, and know Something, None All; There is no cause to envy any for what he hath; there is yet enough for another to dive in, even as in holy Histories, so in all other Scriptures.

2dly, For the *Prophetical*. We must seek the true Sense, by the proper and improper Significations of the Words and Phrases, and by the Scope of the Spirit of God, which ought to be observed from the Text, and Context; and above all, if there be one Head in the Text, or elsewhere, which leadeth unto the right understanding of them: And therefore we must search it, by conferring it with the like Prophecies, much more with the Events, which are already come to pass: For the Event of the whole, or part of the Prophecie, is the best Interpreter: Therefore if the Prophecie is already, altogether, or in part, accomplished and fulfilled, we must, after the native Explication, take notice of the fulfilling of it, not only in the Substance, but in the Circumstances, which are principally contained in the

Prophecies. We may afterwards gather up the Doctrines and general Heads of the Truths which they contain; such as the Prescience, and Providence of God; and then come to the more particular things which are accomplished and fulfilled; in applying this to the Terror of the Wicked; and to the Comfort of the Godly. And in handling of these propheticall Texts, we must study to discern the Degrees of their Accomplishment, for the same Prophecie may have its Accomplishment *Temporally* in some Type, but *Spiritually* in Things and Persons Typified. So divers Prophecies have their fulfilling, in *David*, or *Solomon*, or some others, but Spiritually and Eternally, in *Jesus Christ*, our Lord. Several of the Propheticall Texts, particularly in the Psalms, have their Accomplishment in their first, as it were, shadowing degree, in *David*, *Solomon*, *Saul*, *Doeg*, *Achitophel*; but in their Second Degree, are Accomplished in Christ, our Lord, in regard of the good; but in regard of the bad, in *Judas*, in *Antichrist*, and Hypocrites, and such like wicked Men and Enemies of Christ. Therefore it is, that in some of these Prophecies, there are Words and Things which have not their Accomplishment but in Christ, our Lord, and not in any Prototypes; as particularly the everlasting continuance of the Kingdom in *David*, or in any other of his Race; and such things may be also met with in these Prophecies, which belong properly unto *David*, but improperly unto Christ, our Lord; as when in these Prophecies mention is made of Sin or Sins, or Things which belong to meer Man, and not unto God-Man, who alone truly is without Sin, tho' our Sins are imputed unto him; and that his Members, his chosen People, have Sin still remaining in them, and which does so easily beset and entangle them. And it is yet to be noted, and well discerned

discerned in the handling Prophetical Texts, that this fulfilling is so far advanced in Christ, for some degree, that there are yet to be Accomplished in him, in a more compleat Degree, as in his Kingdom of Grace, into which he is entered, from the time of the Apostles, in regard of the spreading forth of it through the World; but is, and also shall be, from time to time, more fully Accomplished, until it shall be everlastingly his Kingdom of Glory in all Perfection. So in many places of the Revelations, he is said to be entred into his Kingdom, from the 12th. to the 14th. Chap. and 18th. and 19th. The prophetical Texts then concerning his Kingdom, do extend and reach in their fuller Explications and Applications, unto the highest degree of Accomplishment. So we must not say, that they have their Accomplishment, because they have certain and notable Degrees of their Events, from the time of the Apostles; but we must consider seriously, if more ample Degrees are not still promised, and remaining to be fulfilled, unto the Edification and Comfort of the Church of Christ, even in our Time and Days, and after us in the Generation to come. And it behoves us to observe, That there are certain Prophetical Texts, which can't well be handled, except in declaring the Events, as Accomplished, not only in Christ, but also in his Church, who are his People and Members; and even these also gradully by steps. So as the Prophetical Texts, concerning the Adversity and Prosperity of Christ, and of his Sufferings and Victories, immediately are fulfilled in his Person; but they are accomplished immediately also, in the Church, and in the Members of Christ. *Who do thus fill up the remainder of the Sufferings of Christ*, Col. 1. 24. Not by way of Merit, but of conformity to Christ the Head. And so 22. *Psal.* hath

hath had its accomplishment in *David*, yet more fully and perfectly in the Sufferings of Christ on the Cross. Nevertheless they are daily yet accomplishing, and fulfilling more amply in the faithful and true Members of Christ, even in great Princes, who suffer Persecution for the sake of the true Religion. Thus we may, and we ought to think of many more Psalms, and of such Prophetical Texts. There is no doubt but some of the Prophetical Texts, have their more compleat fulfilling in such and such an Affliction of God's Church and People, altho' generally, in all the Prophecies, this is that which we ought to discern also from the several Prophetical Texts of the prosperity of Christ, and his Kingdom; they have indeed their Typical fulfilling in *David*, or *Solomon*, or some other King of that Line, but the compleat fulfilling of them, is in our Lord Jesus Christ, not only at his Resurrection and Ascension, and sitting at the Right Hand of God in himself, but likewise in his Church, in the Victories he gives it, and will yet give it over the World, and over Antichrist, and his most Cruel and Oppressing Enemies, both inward and outward; so that, some of those prophetical triumphant Texts shall have their fuller Accomplishment; some at the Destruction of Antichristian *Babylon*, others at the Conversion of the *Jews*, others at the end of the World, and everlastingly in the Kingdom of Heaven.

To discern, and to know aright those degrees of fulfilling the Prophetical Texts, and to bring them every one to the time of its full and particular Accomplishment, requires the greatest Prudence, nay, a Gift of Discretion; I say, a more particular and special Gift of God's Spirit, which ought earnestly to be asked and improved in all humility and submission, not putting forth our selves too much before the time reserved in God's Hand.

Finally,

Finally, We must also know, that some Prophetical Texts, which have had their fulfilling in some certain fulness in the People of the *Jews*, are yet to be fulfilled in the Christian People; for we know, that the Prophecies of the return, and the deliverance of the Antient People from the Captivity of *Babylon*, are yet in accomplishing in the deliverance and return of the People of God under the New Testament, as well from the Captivity of Satan and Sin; as from the slavery of Antichrist and his Crew. The like Accomplishment have the Prophecies concerning the Ruin and Overthrow of the City of *Jerusalem*, and of the concomitant Evils, Woes, and Miseries, and the following dispersion of the unbelieving *Jews*. These were presages of what has happened some Years since in *Germany*, and what shall yet fall until the end of the World, to the People and Nations who follow the *Jews* in their Sins, especially the Sin of Unthankfulness and Contempt of the Gospel; of its Purity and Simplicity, and of the Spiritual Worship which becomes it, and is agreeable to it. And therefore, it is to be noted, and well observed, in *St. Matt. Chap. 24.* And in *Mark Chap. 13.* And *Luke 22.* That after the Prophecies of the Ruin of the *Jews*, and of *Jerusalem*, there is no other Prophecie but of the end of the World. And wherefore is this? Unless because that there shall be no other kinds of Judgments upon the Rebellious People against the Gospel to the end of the World, than those which are Recorded in Scripture? From whence some faithful Interpreters do well remark, upon those Chapters, That the Lord does delineate and set before us in the Affliction, wherewith the Rebelious and Obstinate *Jews* were Punished, that their Calamities and Miseries were Figures of like Afflictions, to befall a People despising
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and rejecting Christ, until the end of the World. And for this Cause come Pestilence, Wars, and Famine, with Ruines of the principal Cities, such as hath not been seen among the Nations in former Ages, and aggravated with some circumstances, above those of *Jerusalem*, and of the *Jews*. So then, to treat duly upon these Prophetical Texts, the Application must be carried down thus far; and by these means, the Church shall have several Reproofs, Instructions, and Comforts, which are treasured up in them; that the Soul being instructed in the Kingdom of God, may draw out good things, not only Old, but also New, according to the New Occasions, which the Providence of God administers, in going on to accomplish, in great measure, more such Prophetical Texts.

3dly, As for the *Doctrines*, the Explications are to be made according as they be, either clearer, or harder to be understood, as we have noted in the first distinction. Then it is to be noted, if they be Doctrines of Faith, or of Manners, of Religion, or Conversation, touching Mysteries or Duties. Again, it must be observed, if they be propounded Affirmatively, or Negatively; afterwards they must be handled, so far as the Text lays Foundation for, and in such manner, that all that we treat of, hath Relation unto that, which the Text holds forth and contains. Some do take occasion from these Dogmatical Texts, nay, and from the Doctrines which they draw and deduct from other Texts, to enter straitway upon the common place of the Doctrine, propounded in the handling of it; but because this way draws us to a tedious Length, and multiplies Sermons unnecessarily upon the same Text, and necessarily occasions Discourses, which are not according to the Scope and Circumstances of the Text, whereby we become tedious to the Auditors, it were better not to treat of the common place; namely,
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of the Doctrine propounded by Consequences, unless so much as the Text doth give occasion for. For Example, if it treat of the Doctrine of Election, or of Justification, or of the Duties of Piety and Charity; it is not to purpose, to run over all the common places of Election and Justification, of Piety and Charity, but only the particular point of the common Place, the context refers to, and to draw out the uses of the same, as they do issue from the particular instance of the Point there in question; so that will be to give the Auditors, that which the Text doth properly give, and that which will have more Grace and Efficacy, as having Foundation in the Text, and shall not charge them with what appertains unto other Texts, which would not be so seasonable.

4thly, For the *Parabolical Texts*, one can't well explain them, but he must remark and observe attentively the proper Scope, unto which the *Parable* tendeth. There must be great care, especially in handling them well, to consider what the Parable aimeth at Principally, and less Principally, or Primarily and Secondarily, for there may be divers ends, one General and Principal, and others Particular and Subalternate.

Then Secondly, When the Scope is discovered, we must narrowly observe. what the Parable is taken from, and what in it tends unto the general end, and what unto the particular, examining how far every thing in the Parable tendeth and serveth; for tho' there are some things, which are principally of the end of the Parable, and others, which are not so expressed, but serve only to enrich and beautifie the Parable, nevertheless we must not in examining the principal Things neglect the other. As in the study of the Law, so of a Parable, we must make the things which are of

greater Importance, the main of our Labour and Application, and must not neglect or leave out the lesser.

Now to the due examining of Parables, and to reach the intendment of them, we must exactly

consider in them their $\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{Properties,} \\ \text{Qualities,} \\ \text{Effects,} \\ \text{Operations,} \end{array} \right\}$ and that with especial

respect to their *Constitution*, be it *Natural*, *Civil*, or *Moral*, and from them must draw forth the *Confirmed Propositions* which arise from the *Scope* of the Parable, and not those which do not correspond with them. Now upon these Propositions ought to be made the *Redditions* of the Parable, or the things signified in them, and which are Emblemized by these which are put in the Parable, and in the Similitude. And therefore, it's a great mistake, and no right Explication of *Parabolical Texts*, to go about to take in all Resemblances that the Emblem put in the Parable can furnish us with; and to make some Propositions thereupon, and to make answerable Redditions, which are not of the Scope of it, neither General, nor Particular, nor First, nor Second; but we must keep our selves precisely to the Resemblances, which answer the very Scope and Drift of them, and then must form upon them the Propositions and Redditions of the Parable. Now these Propositions, and corresponding Redditions, that are of the ends and intendments of the Parable, will render the Sense clear by the Similitudes, and thence will naturally follow some Propositions of Doctrines and instructive Information, which shall be either of things Present, or to Come. And if the Parable is *Historical*,

Historical, as that of the Prophet *Nathan*, 2 *Sam.* 12. And of the Lord's Vineyard, *Isa.* 5. They are to be handled in the manner of *Doctrines*, which do proceed from *Historical Texts*, but with *Illumination* of the *Similitude*. Where there are future things, and so the Parable is *Prophetical*, as several of our Lord Jesus Christ are, particularly that of the Labourers in the Vineyard, *Mat.* 20. And of the Wise and Foolish Virgins, *Mat.* 25. We must handle them as the *Doctrines* of *Prophetical Texts*, but with the *Illustration* of the *Similitude*: Or if the *Parable* treat of some *Doctrine*, as of the Rebellion and Rejection of the *Jews*, and Calling of the *Gentiles*, and the mixture of *Hypocrites* with the *Sincere*, as it seems in the Parable of the King, making the Nuptials of his Son, *Mat.* 22. So the *Parabolicals* are *Dogmaticals*; and therefore also, they are to be handled *Dogmatically*, but it must be done in the *Light* of the *Similitude*, for the matters of these *Texts* have these *Advantages*, that one there finds the *Similitudes* as quite ready done and at hand; but upon other *Texts* we must more invent them. Where they are in part *Historical* and *Prophetical*, as may be observed in the *Prophets*, which do represent in part, the past and present wickedness of the *People*, and in part their *Judgments* for their *Malice* and *Obstinacy* in *Sin*, or their *Judgment* and *Punishment* yet to come; and so are some *Parables* declared by the Lord in the Gospel against the *Jews* and their chief *Priests*, their *Scribes* and *Pharisees*; and therefore in observing always the reports of the *Similitudes*, we ought to handle them after the manner of *Historical* and *Prophetical Texts*. Where they are in part *Doctrinal* and *Prophetical*, as one may see almost through the *Canticles*, where the most part of the *Parables* do represent to us altogether, and one with the other,

Same Doctrines, concerning Christ and the Church, and the Mysteries concerning them, with some Prophecies which respect the future State of the Church. We may apply these Mysteries to Christ and his Church, with, and by the help of lively Similitudes which do represent them, and so far as the scope doth bear, we also shew how Christ and his Church have been, such and under such Circumstances as the Similitudes do denote, more particularly in such times and seasons as the Parable points at. And it is to be taken notice, that the parables in the *Canticles* (as also others elsewhere) are for the most part contained in one word or two, and not enlarged in divers Propositions, and some general or particular Redditions, as frequently in the Old and New Testament. Wherefore to handle them aright, we must Analyze them, and resolve them into their several Parts and Explications, and so we may handle them fitly to the intent of every Parable.

It may also be observed, that there are some Parables which for substance may be *Historical*, as one may conceive in the Parable of the Rich Man and *Lazarus*. Those may be handled both as *Histories* and *Parables*.

To conclude, In the handling of these *Parabolical Texts*, tho' in the Explication of them nothing is to be mentioned but that which is properly of the End and Scope of the Parable, so that the Reports of the Similitudes may be more immediately corresponding, yet in the exhortative, or comfortable Application, or in Confutation or Correction, we may enlarge those Reports more particularly and according to the occasion, if so be that all these more particular Reports be subordinate unto the generals in the Explication, and that they be derived as in encreasing waters from the fountain, for to water so much the better the divers parts of the Faith
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and life of the Hearers, whereby they will be much fructified. And it can't be said what rich and fine variety will present it self unto an humble, attentive, and studious Minister, who by that diversity and clearness of the particular reports, will be able to enlighten and animate the Spirits of the Auditors, unto the acceptable reception of such Exhortation and Redargution, nay and Confutation, and more piercing Correction: For we shall see how the holy Ghost doth lead him, as by a continual thread of the Similitude, that makes such a particular Application.

Now to the intent that the Explication and Application of the *Parabolical Texts* may have their just and convenient reports, in generals and in particulars, immediate or mediate, it is very necessary that he, that doth handle them, should be exercised in the reading and knowledge of *Natural, Civil, and Moral Histories*, for from thence he must draw out the true Reports, according to the Nature and Condition, properties and qualities, the effects and vertues of the things which are put for Similitudes; at least so far as he is to treat of them, he ought to consult *Classick Authors* which do write on them, as *Pliny* and *Solin*, and such Authors; which for that respect are worthy to be bought and read.

3dly, But *Thirdly*, whether the Texts be more clear or more difficult to be understood, according to the first Distinction, whether they are Historical or Prophetical; Doctrinal or Parabolical, according to the second Distinction. It is very convenient that the body of every Sermon consist of these parts, be it more openly or more hiddenly, namely. (1.) Of some *Exordium*. (2.) Of the Observation of the *Coherence*. (3.) Of some *Paraphrases*. (4.) Of the *Division* of the parts of the Text: (5.) Of the *Explication* of the parts. (6.) Of the *Doctrines* or Instructions.

structions and their Proof. (7.) Of the Uses of every Doctrine.

1. As for the *Exordium*. As it is not good that it be too short, so also it ought not to be too long, but only it must serve for the Introduction to bring the Auditors within the Text, with a becoming gracefulness. The *Exordium* may be taken diversly, but that which seems to be most to purpose is, of the general Subject, and is to be as the marrow of the Text, or some notable Circumstance in the Text, and seems to have some particular Authority, if this general Scope of the Subject, or observation of some notable Circumstance be taken from the Holy Scriptures. For thus by Scripture we are lead from the Entrance, unto the general understanding of the Scriptures to be treated of, either of the Text or the Sum of it.

2dly, As to the *Coherence*, it ought to refer to what is not very remote, but to what is near and in view, by a short analysis of the Context, and so we shall find how the Text comes in, and in what order it lies, and then there must come some Observation of that which follows. And generally in the Entrance of the Text, there are some adverbial or conjunctive particles, which help to discover the Coherence, from which arise some good Instructions, which one may briefly handle, or he may reserve them for Explication, rather than place them among the Doctrines.

It is to be noted, that when we Preach several times on the same Text, having spoken of the Coherence in the first Discourse, in the other following Discourses, more or less in the Place of a Coherence, a short repetition of that which hath been said in the precedent Exercise will be seasonable, some do make their *Exordium* by such Repetition, which sometimes is necessary to be done.

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3dly, As to the *Paraphrase*, it ought to contain the Sum of the History, and of the Propheſie, or the Reasoning, or the Argument of the doctrinal Text, or the Sum of the parabolical Text, but when we have in the *Exordium* comprized the marrow and the Sum of the *Paraphrase*, it is not ſo neceſſary, but may be better omitted.

4thly, As to the *Division* of the parts, it ought to be Artificial, and yet the moſt familiar as may be, without multiplication of too many Parts or curious Subdiviſions of them, and after the Parts of the Division are recited, then it is proper to gather them together and to re-unite them by repeating of the Text, for ſo the Auditors ſhall ſee ſo much the clearer, the Parts divided and diſtinguiſhed do make but one body of the matter to be explained and applyed, and tho they be diſjoyned and ſeparated in the handling of them, yet they are joyned to the principal Subject to which they tend. And ſo one is to paſs on unto the Explication of every Part with proper Transitions, and here we may excite and quicken the Attention of the Auditors, as we end the Division, or begin the Explication.

5thly, As to the *Explication*, beſides that we muſt obſerve as above-ſaid, the Kinds of the Texts, according as they be either *Historical*, *Prophetical*, *Dogmatical* or *Parabolical*, we muſt firſt open the body of the Text, and its Arguments there inferred. 2dly, The Context which follows and proceeds. 3dly, The principal End of the Spirit, which one may diſcern from the two precedent Points of Arguments, both of the Text and the Context. 4thly, The Harmony of Scripture, eſpecially of Parallel Scriptures, and therefore double knowledge is neceſſary, firſt of the Tongues, and eſpecially the original Tongues, and of the true property and right uſe of the Words.

Words and Phrases in them, with diligent looking into the variety of the Greek, and Ancient and Modern Versions, for in them one may find divers Expressions which will help the understanding so much the better, to frame right Conceptions, and Descriptions of Things contained under the Vail of Words. The other thing that is necessary, is a good knowledge of Theological things, in the common Places of matters there treated of, for so one shall better understand the Points to be handled, and shall prophesy according to the Analogy of Faith, laying down solid Foundations for the Particulars to be held forth, if one follows the Method above-mentioned, as shall add a General Head after the Explication of every Part, which may end with a repetition of the Text thus Explained.

6thly, Now as to the *Doctrines* or Instructions, after we have shown the plain and true Deduction of the unfolded Text, we must clear it, and confirm it by Proofs drawn.

1st, From other Passages, which must not only be recited, but Explained briefly; and if the Instruction drawn be very clear, it is not so much to purpose, to alledge for Proofs, Divers, and many Passages, but one or two will suffice, and the others which may be expressed, may be reserved, to serve in the Use and Application of the Point.

2dly, From Examples, which for the most part ought to be taken out of the Holy Scriptures, but also in part from the History of good Authors, and from Experience. These must be proper, agreeable to the Analogy of Faith, apparent and more than probables, and they must be taken but from good and approved Authors, of such as are Reverenced, and of good report, and yet, but a few, they must not be many in a Sermon, for besides the loss of Time in gathering up many, we derogate from the Majesty of Divine Truths,

Truths by too great a mixture of what is humane. And if they be taken out of light and doubtful Authors, or such as are fabulous, especially if the recited Histories surpass the Vulgar belief, and have little appearance of Truth; it depreciates the Authority of the Preaching of the Word : Nay, it insensibly undermines the Authority of the Scriptures, as if they did not furnish us with Examples of greater and more considerable things, and more Rare than Humane Writings. And this they do, who Study to feed Curious Ears with Humane Histories ; even such as are *Pagan* and *Anti-christian*, which makes an Ostentation of greater and rarer things in appearance and shew, than the Holy Scripture ; for it is, in some sort, to Bravade the Holy Scriptures, and to debase its Authority, in making it to contain things less admirable and rare. This gives occasion to Carnal minds to think meanly of the Holy Writings, and to take the liberty to Level Scripture Histories with those that are Prophane, and to dispute the rarest Examples of Holy Scriptures, particularly those of the Old Testament, which is done most dangerously by two sorts of Examples and Histories. The first sort is, of the Writings and Fabulous Histories of pretended, or even of true Saints, which the Papists have invented. For the Examples which are drawn from divers and extraordinary Miracles, to advance Popish Saints, have a Tendency to darken, (for it is to this end the Devil hath caused them to be invented,) the Examples of the Scriptures, as not approaching their pretended ones. Oh Impiety ! to obscure the Glory of Divine Miracles, by such as are Fabulous. And, which is worse, they are invented for the confirming of some Impiety and Falsity. The other is of

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fabulous Histories of *Pagans*, and particularly of *Prophane Poets*, and their false Gods and Goddesses; especially when compared and parallel'd with the Example of God the Father, and Son, or the Holy Ghost. For these Examples have the same effect with those of the *Popish Legends*. And again, they Prophane the Name of God, when the Actions of God, either the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Ghost, are Represented, or Confirmed, or otherwise Cleared, by the pretended Actions of such false Gods, whose Names ought not to be in our Mouths. And, from their abounding Number, the whole Discourse may be rendered suspicious, since it is stuffed with Allegations, which we know, by the very Naming them, to be absolutely false. O Intollerable Impiety! O most Detestable Falsity! Wherefore, whosoever will Preach Piously, must take heed of giving offence to the Divine Majesty, in using them in the hearing of Pious Ears. Also the Apostle in *Timothy*, exhorts all faithful Ministers to take heed to themselves; Nay, doth charge them, very strictly, not to use them at all, *Give no heed to Fables*, 1 Tim. 4. and Chap. 4. v. 7. *Refuse* (saith he) *Prophane and Old Wives Fables, and Exercise thy self rather unto Godliness*, opposing them to the Nourishment, in the words of faith, and of sound Doctrine; which we must diligently follow, as appears in reading with this 7th v. the 6th v. and Tit. 1. v. 14. He must not give heed to Judicial Fables, *According to the Commandments of Men, which do turn from the Truth*. For, indeed, Men are easily perverted by such fabulous Histories, and, by such fabulous Reports, are tempted to make no great Account of the Truth, as appears too sadly in them whose Ears are Tickling and Itching.

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If we would pierce the Heart, and not Prophanely tickle the Ears, we must use other sort of Examples. But if we use, as sometimes we may, *Pagan Histories*, let it be, as in things apparently true, so in those which are to bring the Christian Hearers unto an Holy shame of themselves, that they shou'd need to be advanced in vertuous Examples, by the *Heathens* and *Pagans* : And we may use them also for this end, when it is needful and convenient, to discover the Impiety and Iniquity of Men in the State of Nature ; knowing and observing nevertheless, that which the Apostle says, *Eph. 5. 12. That it is even unseemly to speak of those things, which are done of them in secret.* As also, to convince the Adversaries, even by their own Histories, if our Discourse leads us to confute some Errors, or some fault of theirs. And on such occasions, and for such ends, one may sometimes alledge some Examples of the Histories and Writings of the *Papists*, and particularly, the Infamous Life and Death of some of their Popes, and other Impostors. Wherefore it is necessary, that he that will Preach well, should also Exercise himself in the reading of all sorts of Histories, that he may chuse out, and use the fit ones, when it is seasonable ; but especially, he ought to give himself to the reading of Ecclesiastical Histories, Antient and Modern, for it is chiefly from them that we are to draw out Examples ; and especially the Histories of the *Martyrs*, whose Deeds, Sayings and Sufferings are so much the more Remarkable, because they were guided and assisted more particularly by the Holy Ghost, according to the promise of our Lord, in the 10th of *Mat.* And therefore what is alledged of this kind, comes nearer to the Scriptures given by

the Holy Ghost, and it is an Accomplishment of that which it hath foretold and promised. And read those Histories most, which do give an Account of the fulfilling of the Predictions and Prophecies of the Old and New Testament. And therefore read not only those of the *Martyrs*, but the Histories of all other sorts of People, of whom the Prophetical Text do speak. This will appear necessary to one that would Preach on *Daniel* and the *Revelation*, and *Mat. 24*. And other Prophecies of the Old and New Testament.

3^{dly}, The Doctrines and Instructions must be cleared and confirmed from Reasons, agreeable unto the Scripture, and drawn accordingly, and, for the most part, from the Word of God. And therefore as in proving by Examples, we must not recede from Scripture, no more must it be done in confirming by reasons, which may be fetched and learned from the Holy Scripture. And therefore, he that prepares himself to Preach, shall do well to Labour to discern well the Proofs and Passages which prove, by way of Reasons, the several Doctrines of Truth, that he may reserve them for their proper place and season. Now tho' those Proofs, by Passages of Scripture Examples and Reasons, may be Propounded in this Order, nevertheless, one may, as his subject leads him, begin with the Examples, Namely; in the Historical Texts, and sometimes with Reasons, Namely, in the Dogmatical Texts.

7. After the Proofs, as they may be necessary more or less for the Confirmation of the Doctrine, will follow seasonably the *Uses*, which may be *Divers* as the Apostle shews, 2 *Tim. 3. 16*. The first Use is, a Use of
Conviction.

Conviction, and *Confutation* of some Errors in the Faith or Service of God, or in the Life and Conversation, which is done in shewing how the Doctrine, raised from the Text, and confirmed, is altogether contrary. And such Conviction ought to be done more particularly against the Errors of the times which do Reign, or are in danger to be introduced in the Church of God; for it is expedient, nay necessary too, that all Errors of that sort be thoroughly confuted. As for the Antient Heresies and Blasphemies, they must never be stirred, but when the occasion doth fitly present it self; when they are Buried, it is not seasonable to speak of them, but it is dangerous to reveal them, lest Men of corrupt Minds should suck them in, and for fear the weak and simple should be foiled; nay, and least tender Consciences should be tempted thereby, especially when they are great Blasphemies, as those Old Errors and Heresies are.

Now, as in the allegation of Histories, so in Heresies, there must be care taken, lest instead of being Preachers of the Word of God, we become the *Common Cryers* of the Words and Doctrines of Men; nay, of the Devil himself. There must be also a Judicious Discretion, that in accusing some Antient *Hereticks*, we do not, amongst them, blame the Innocent and Holy Persons, who did not hold those Errors which some do attribute to them, but are Calumnies of their Adversaries; whereas, in their time and day, they did discover Errors and Abuses, and so their Enemies Persecuted them, not only by Fire and Blood, the Stake and the Sword, but also by the Poisonous Errors of their false Tongues. Those who have read the Histories of the *Vandois* and *Albigeois*, and some
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signal Persons among them, and have read the other of *Papists*, upon the Controversies, they may perceive, by such Errors and Heresies, which are falsely attributed unto them by the *Papists*, and by some Ministers among the Reformed, who wind and blow the Horn of Calumniation after them, under the specious pretence that they are great discerners of Heresies, namely; Antient Heresies, but they really Calumniate the Orthodox, many a time, with Notorious indiscretion and gross Ignorance. We must not also, under the same pretence, tho' when all is pretended, it is but vain Ostentation, I say, we must not multiply the Opinions of divers *Hereticks*, as well to avoid the horridness of Calumniating Good Men, as also, not to fill the Spirits of Slight and Light Gospellers, with a multitude of other Mens Conceptions; nor must we add our own, with appearance of Reason; that because there are diversity of Sentiments and Opinions upon such Doctrines, we our selves also may take liberty to conceive and divulge something of our own upon them, especially if we hear that some Noted Persons among the Antients, have conceived diversly, and contrary to some of the Orthodox Doctrines. Therefore we must not meddle, to Name such divers Opinions of Great Men among the Antients. But in the necessary confuting the Reigning Errors or Heresies, or new buddings forth of them, which we find are conformable, and like to those of the Antient *Hereticks*, and most of all known to be so, and Infamous, it will be most convenient to shew, how *Satan* heretofore overcame in such *Hereticks*, and now promotes the same interest in the Present and New Instruments of his Kingdom.

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This Conformity cannot but be very odious unto the Godly Auditors, and will engender in them so much the greater detestation, since that the Doctrines propounded and confirmed from the Scriptures, do so clearly overthrow them. Thus in confuting the Errors and Heresies, we may enter into the Controversie of the times, but not to handle them throughout, but only so much and so far as the Doctrine treated of gives occasion, and no further, lest there be a spending of too much time, and lest it should anticipate and prejudice the other following very necessary Uses in the Application, which would not have their full compleat time, if these Controversies be too much followed, and in their fullest extent; and, indeed, great heed must be taken, that whilst one is much taken up about many Controversies, that there be not a losing of Piety, under pretence of establishing the Truth, which even, according to the Antient Proverb, doth *Lose it self in too much debating and contending*. Also we must have a Care here, of that which the Apostle cautions us about, *1 Tim. 6. 20.* and in *2 Tim. 2. 23.* For as he saith in his first Epistle, *Chap. 6.* We must not be of those *that foolishly dote after Questions and Debates of Words, which engender envy, strife, slanders, and false surmises*. Wherefore also, we must well look to our selves in this matter, not to accuse any, no, not the formal Adversaries, of Errors, which, in Truth, they hold not. As likewise, on the other side, we must be very wary, that under pretence of confuting the Errors, of the Adversaries to the Truths of Christ, we do not rather establish Errors, by confuting them either feebly, and without Judgment, or, as Prevaricators, and not sincerely.

2dly, And this we must keep our selves from in the *Second Use*, which should be of *Correction* and *Redargution*, so much charged upon the faithful Pastors, and so much Practiced, with real Prudence, by the Holy Prophets and Apostles. For this is it, for which the Lord has more particularly made his Ministers of the Word, *Watchmen*, *Overseers*, and *Inspectors*, or *Bishops*, that in marking, observing, and taking notice of the scandalous, perverse, and wicked Manners of Men, and of their Errors and Heresies, they must and ought to reprehend, rebuke and reprove them, so far as they swerve from, and walk contrary to the true Doctrine, that the good Minister and Faithful Servant of God hath expounded, declared and applyed. And therefore, notwithstanding that, he must reprove all wicked practices; yet he must most particularly reprove those which fall under his inspection; but in such a manner, not so to particularize all the sins of the Wicked, and the vile unknown Arts of most part of them, as the Black Father Confessors, who, in Confessing the People, do, by their foul and prophane propositions concerning sin, both teach and promote it. And that they do not discover the particular sins of sinners, except they themselves publish their sins as *Sodom*. Thus the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, and other *Jews* did, and at last *Judas* the Traitor, upon our Lord's *Redargution* and *Reproof*. Now this Reproof ought to be so pursued and pressing, that Mens Sins and Wickednesses may appear such as they be, even altogether sinful, exceeding sinful and dangerous. And to that end, we must shew the contrariety and opposition that is in sin, unto the pure and holy Word of God, and to that Word of God particularly in the Text, under present consideration, and the Doctrine which is drawn from it: That thus, by the Evidence

dence, and in the Demonstration and Power of the Holy Ghost, the sinner may be cast down and put to shame before the Lord, and before his People. Therefore all Arguments which may be drawn from the Text, and the Doctrine drawn from it, must be pressed, forced and urged with threatnings, unto the Impenitent and Obdurate. Temporal, Spiritual and Eternal Judgments, must be denounced upon all hardened and impenitent sinners.

3dly, And thus we shall commodiously pass on unto a *third Use*, Namely, of *Exhortation*, as well as dehorting from the contrary evil, as in exhorting to the Duty, which corresponds with the Doctrine drawn from the Text. For this end and purpose, we must gather all proper Motives which are found in the Text, in each particular Branch of the Application, especially when it is upon a Parabolical Text, and a Text that provides and furnishes the Light of Similitudes and Resemblances, as on all other Texts; also in some sort or other, peculiar unto their Nature and Condition. And even for this place, we may reserve some Passages, which would have too much abounded in the explication, in like manner, we may do with some Examples and Reasons of the Point, which may be reserved, and may more aptly come in here, so much the more to move and gain upon the affections, and to stir the hearers up either to the abhorrence and forsaking of all sins, or to the full pursuit of all that is good and holy. And after all is done, one proper means, to awaken and allure the good hearers, are the precious promises of God, which are in the Text, or may be applied by the confronting and comparing of other Scripture Passages.

4thly, And here we may come to that, which we ought to conclude the whole, Namely, the 4th Use, which is an Use of *Comfort*, either in general, unto the Church of God, or in particular, unto the particular Souls, which are Members of Christ; I say, the comforts which proceed from such a Doctrine. And this must be done with singular prudence, according to the exigence and necessity of the times, and the People, we have to deal with, either for the present, or for that which is in prospect. Now, as the *Convictions*, *Redargutions* and *Exhortations* may be many, so may the *Consolations* be many and divers, and so much the more, as one draws towards the Conclusion; so much the more, ought he to be holily warmed himself, and be filled with Divine Consolations, as there is no Truth of Christ, but does abundantly Administer and furnish it, if it be well digested and understood, and to Comfort others, with the Comforts wherewith he is Comforted of God; and we must pronounce and utter them, with the most endearing and affecting impressions, as is possible, according to the Text and Doctrine contained in it, to the end, that the faithful hearers may see themselves, by means of the true and solid Doctrine, nourished in Grace, and quickened to the increasing in the knowledge and true Grace of God, and may at length be consummated in the State of Glory, and pass in the keeping of Gods Commandments from Earth to Heaven. Thus one may make an excellent conclusion upon the main and first Doctrine, if one handles but one, or upon the last Doctrine, if he handles divers, passing from every one of them, by some apt and fit transition, to the Consolation Administred from the foregoing Doctrine; so, I say, the Conclusion, in which some do make a short repetition of the heads, that have been treated
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and insisted on) may be made, by a Consolation, very comfortable, which the Gracious Soul foretasting on Earth, shall most perfectly enjoy in Heaven.

2dly, Now the method upon some Section, or Sabbath-Division of the Catechism, is also either Cryptic and Hidden, or Tecknic and Artificial.

1st, The Cryptic is Practiced in the same manner as on a Text, according to the Principal subject of a Text.

2dly, The Artificial may be Practiced in two manners.

The First is, the following of the Proposition, and particularly the resolving of every Question and Answer into their several Parts, and making inferences from them, according to the order in which they are laid down, with convenient instruction upon every principal Proposition. This method, if one be not careful, will be very long, and therefore, if we choose to follow it, we should see that it be not too long, nor too short, and so must shorten the Inferences from every Proposition, or insist chiefly on some of the principal parts, not staying upon the others, but only analyzing them.

3dly, The second manner, is the treating upon a clear and short Indication of the Parts, and of their Arguments, with some brief and familiar Analysis of the Questions and Answers, to propose to ones self, and unto ones Auditors, the principal points of the common place of it, or of the Controversie about it; for here under a Section of the Catechism, we may handle it more fully than upon a Text: Regarding however, and having a respect unto that which is most necessary, and fittest for the hearers, and for the present Circumstances, and enlarging upon the Explication of the common place, or the point of Controversie, and the Heads that have been touched upon, making the proper uses as on a Text, and

as is expedient for the season : So the same Heads may be handled, or with changing of the Heads, as often as the Sabbath shall return; and yet still the Application may very much vary, according to the particular occurrences in several years. The faithful Minister ought to consider this carefully, and do accordingly, praying continually unto the Lord for his special assistance and direction, who knows in his infinite wisdom, what is most for his own Glory, and what will make and tend most to the Edification of his People, which he has committed to his Praying Minister.

Now, for a close of all, whatsoever method we use, whether upon a Text, or upon the Catechism, the faithful Minister of the Gospel, must endeavour that the Stile and the Phrase be neat, clear and intelligible, grave and sober, becoming the Holy matters he treats of. He must put away, not only all Slovenliness and Sordidness, but all lightness and scurrility : And altho' the diversity of the matters may require some diversity of Stile, nevertheless, every one may make use of the Gift of Words, nay, of Eloquence, so he joyn it with Prudence, when he is explaining the more proper Phrases to inform the Judgment; and in the making of the Application, he should use the most fit and proper expressions that he can. to stir up the ~~Affections~~ : And this is to be done, *Affection* without vain ~~Affection~~, and odious Ostentation, when *Affectations* he is the Mouth of the People, and his own, in Prayer unto God; and God's mouth in Preaching to the People. This must be avoided in all Discourses, whether we speak unto God, or unto Men, especially in Discourses of the Word of God : Simplicity does best agree with Divine Truths, for in this manner, the Scripture is given to us : Yet, at the same time, it carries its Majesty.

jesty very sensibly in the Hearts of the faithful: We
 are then to retain the form of wholsom Words, as
 well as the Matter, both in Preaching, and in our or-
 dinary Discourse. For this purpose, one may, and
 ought to take pains to premeditate both the Things
 and the Words: Yet however, a Man is not so to tie
 up himself, that if God giveth the faculty of expres-
 sing himself better, he ought not to restrain himself,
 when God enlargeth the heart and opens the mouth.
 This may be done by fixing well in our memory, by
 serious and painful study, the *Principal Periods* in eve-
 ry part, from the *exordium* to the conclusion. For by
 this means, if better Things and Words do occur, they
 may be made use of, and, without any trouble, we
 may take up again the thread of our Discourse. Un-
 to which end, as on the one side, we must not neg-
 lect the necessary Preparation; so on the other, we
 must encourage our selves in God, and endeavour to
 Preach by faith: I mean not only by *Faith on the*
Word of God, which we Preach, but by *Faith on the*
Promise of God, that he will be with us in the Work,
 and assist us in it. Therefore we must implore his
 Presence and Powerful Assistance, behaving our selves
 in all humility, and seeking only his Glory, and the
 best Edification of his People in dispensing his Word.
 This is that, which will most of all strengthen the
 understanding, and help it to apt and good concepi-
 ons, and will corroborate the Memory, more than the
 Rules of the Art of Memory; of which, if any one
 makes use of, let him take heed, that by those Me-
 morials *Real*, or *Verbal*, he chargeth not only his
 Memory more than needeth, but also his understanding
 with absurd Fancies and Ideas, and such as are unsui-
 table.

table to the Holiness of the Work we are about. The best helps for the Art of Memory, ought to be taken from a good Logical, and Theological Digestion of the Matter we are to treat of. Unto this also may serve, a prudent dispersing of fit and *apt Similitudes*, through all the parts of our Discourse; for they are as so many *Pillars*, set to uphold and bear up the Memory: And as for *Similitudes*, we ought to know that they are necessary throughout all the Parts of a Discourse, for the help of the Memory, not only of the Preacher, but also of the Hearer; And even for to clear so much the more their understandings, in explaining familiarly, and by proper resemblances, the things propounded. They must not be too frequent, nor heaped one upon another, but they must be scattered here and there with Discretion. Those who stuff their Discourses with too many *Similitudes*, may, by a continual interlacing of them, please some Auditors that are less discreet, but will not give to the hungry and thirsting Soul, the substantial and solid Meat of the Word of God; I say, they will not give them that nourishment which will feed and refresh them. These are like one that should serve his Guests with fine Lights, burning in a Candlestick of Gold and Silver, without setting before them, filling and satisfying Meat. Therefore we must not affect *Similitudes*, nor seek out for affected ones, but they must be taken and put conveniently, and aptly, and no more than needs must, for to inform and enlighten the Auditors in the matters to be understood, or practised. It is true, that in handling Parabolical Texts, the *Similitudes* are more frequent, and as from a continued course, but this is, because that the Texts are Composed of them,
and

and it ought to be also in the refusals, as we have heard, which Answers unto the general and particular ends of the Parables. In fine, upon other Texts, it ought to be less frequent, and upon no Text whatsoever may they be forced, nor fetched from things extravagant and strange, and which is Foreign to vulgar knowledge; but Similies must be taken from things that are familiar and known: And yet still nevertheless, not from coarse, or ill becoming, much less from filthy and vain things. For as at Meal and at Table, when one has Guests at Supper, he will bring before them the best of Candles, as of the purest Tallow and sweetest Wax, not stinking and nasty Ingredients, to entertain the Guests, we Love and Honour; So must it be with Similitudes, we must make those to shine, and to be grateful to the Members and Disciples of Christ, and his Church and People, his Favorites and Worthies, we must present them with sweet things and sound, and that no way stinking and infectious, such as give grace unto the hearers. Wherefore, here great caution is to be used about Similitudes and Fables, for fear of uttering and propounding absurd things, and no way becoming, or suiting the sanctity and gravity of the Pastoral Charge: One may sometimes alledge very fit Fables, and meet with some in Scripture, as in the 9th of Judges, of Trees, going forth at a time to anoint them a King: But it must be rarely, and that the thing doth naturally present it self; for altho' the Morals may be good, Tales and Fables are not always of good manners, much less are they Pious.

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And as we must not set forth too many Similitudes, nor all sorts of Similitudes; So much less must we alledge, and bring in a Sermon too many sayings and sentences, nor all sorts of sayings and sentences of Authors, either Classical, or Ecclesiastical. I don't say, but we may, and ought sometimes to alledge them, but it must be very rarely and very seasonably. As particularly then, when it is needful for the Minister and People to see and know the Conformity between the Doctrine Preached and Pressed, with that of the Antient Doctors and Pastors, and that those of the present Age Preach and Profess no other, but what hath been received in former Ages, and times of the greatest purity and simplicity. For by this means, the Calumny of the Adversaries without, and of the Hypocrites, Worldly and Carnal Gospellers within the Church of God, may be the better abated and reprov'd; and the Pastors and the faithful Hearers, are the more freed from false Accusations of Novelty and Scrupulosity. And therefore, we cannot more fitly alledge and bring them, than upon the Questions and Practices contested by gain-saying Spirits, without and within the Church. But it must not be to Build, or ground any Doctrine or Practice upon, as the *Papists* do, who resolve a great part of their Religion into Humane Authority, after the way and manner of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, whom our Lord reprehends, in the Explication of the Commandments on the 6th of *Mat.* For Religious Doctrines and Practices, must be built and established upon the Ground and Foundation of Divine Authority. Quotations therefore, must not be brought, to ground what we Preach upon the Authority of humane Authors, but they are only to be
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made use of, to shew the agreement between them and us, in the Doctrine which is founded upon the Divine Authority of the Word. And therefore, as the ends of the allegations ought to be very right, so they must be from the most Antient Authors, and of the most simple and pure Antiquity. Or if the allegation be of the more corrupt Ages, there were that have withstood holily and steadily the growing Errors and Corruptions, and have shined as Lights in the midst of a corrupt and degenerate Age, and have in that their Age given some Witness unto the Truth. These ought not to be alledged, unless it be to let Men see that our very Adversaries, when they are sober, are Judges of the Truth on our side. And for that end, one may alledge sometimes the most obstinate Adversaries. But it must be confessed, that this may have more place in Controversies, than in Sermons; for in Sermons, these Allegations are not so proper, and agree not so well with the end and institution of Preaching the Word of God.

These therefore must be used, but very sparingly and rarely : And as we must alledge but the best Authors, so it must be the best of their Sentences. For as we must not quote all sorts of Authors (since it is the Voice of the Lord, that must sound and be heard whilst the word is Preached) but the best only ; so also we must not produce all manner of Sentences and Sayings, but only those which are most sincere, delightful, and savory, such as are most full and pithy, the most concise, and that help the understanding, and move the Holy Affections. Now as amongst the best Authors, the chiefest and most Famous Doctors and Masters of the Primitive Church, and the successive Re-

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reformed Churches ; especially those that have been Confessors and Martyrs of our Lord Jesus Christ, are to be principally cited, for their short and ejaculatory Confessions to God and Men, and their signal Aphorisms, are most worthy our regard ; Because they come nearer to the Holy Scriptures ; for according to that promise, *Mat. 10. 20.* It hath not been them which have spoken, but the Spirit of God, our Father, and their Father, which hath spoken in them. And indeed these are the Deeds, Aphorisms, and Sentences, which may be alledged, with most Edification unto the faithful Hearers. Now how far we may alledge the Sayings, and Sentences of those Authors in Preaching, we cannot better conceive nor express, than it is in the Article of the *Discipline of the Churches of France*, worthy for this purpose, to be noted and practiced by all Pastors. — In these words, *Ministers must be moderate in alledging the Writings of Antient Doctors, and much more Prophane Authors and Histories.* Artie. XII. Wherefore the manner of Preaching that those have, which affect the allegation of Authors, and do fill their Sermons with them, is not to be approved ; especially of those who do not content themselves, to stuff them with Citations of the best, but do cite Authors indifferently, and without discretion, both good and bad, and that not only among the *Ecclesiasticks*, but also among the *Clofficks* : And especially who do not choose out some special Sentences, and those of Authors of best repute, but report the most vulgar and common amongst them, if so be they can but say they Name some Author or other. For, *First*, there is an Affectation and manifest Ostentation which becometh no Man, much less a Christian, least of all a Minister of the

the Gospel, who ought to propound to himself to know nothing amongst a People, but Jesus Christ, and him Crucified, and to Preach and Practice in the greatest simplicity: Not only must he shew in his Life, all simplicity and humility, but even in his Preaching also. But when he comes with Ostentation of Words, and of great Reading, and shew of much Learning, and insight into Authors, to be admired by the unlearned People; is this to Preach in the Name, and in the stead of the Lord, according to his Duty and Office? O no! Truly these Preach up themselves in their phantries, and in the phantries of their ignorant Hearers: But to the judicious and discreet Auditors, they betray and discover their own Ignorance and Folly. But that which is worse, is, *Secondly*, That they beget prejudices in the hearts of their Auditors, against their Ministry, and go about to depreciate the Authority of the Holy Scriptures; for instead of keeping up in the Consciences of Men and Women, the Throne of Authority which God erects there by his Word, these conceited Quoters of Fathers and other Authors, erect a humane Throne in the hearts of the People to their great disadvantage. For the Auditors ordinarily hearing nothing else, or nothing so much as the Authority of such and such an Author, and of such and such Men, and especially when Named Saints and Holy Fathers, such a Father, and such a Saint, N. N. says this and thus, instead of hearing *thus saith the Lord*, thus saith the Lord my God, and Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, or thus say the Holy Pen Men of Scripture which were Divinely inspired, are taken off the Scriptures, and their faith is subjected to the Dominion of Men. These Preachers do sily convey

Mans Authority upon the Conscience, impose upon our Faith and Practice, which they ground upon the dictates and sayings of Men, contrary to that of the Apostle Paul, Eph. 2. 20. *We ought to be built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus-Christ himself being the chief Corner Stone.* The Faith of the Hearers is in great danger of being perverted, when scarce in a whole Sermon they hear one Prophet or Apostle Named, but a very great Number of Ecclesiastical Authors, nay, and also of Classical; And again, when the Auditors shall hear the very sentences of Scripture Quoted, as the sayings of Men, without reference to the Book of Scripture, whence they are Originally taken, it weakens their faith in God's Word, and argues a great contempt of it in the Preacher, who stamps a humane Authority on the Divine Oracles.

3dly, There is yet this evil in it, that not only the Authority of Men is set up and erected in Mens Consciences, instead of the Authority of Scripture: But also it is often the Authority of those Men, which have contributed more or less, to the corrupting of the Truth of God, this exceedingly establishes the Error and Corruption. For when Men hear the Names, not only of the Principal Doctors of the more pure Church, but of the Church, inclining to err in the Faith, and Leaning to Superstition, quoted and alledged with the Denomination of Holy Fathers, and Persons of great Judgment, their Authority being advanced amongst the Auditors, Errors and Abuses, do easily slide and creep in; and this has more or less helped to introduce several Errors into the Church of Jesus Christ. For what will not the inward temptations

ons of the Flesh, and the outward temptations of the World, and of *Anti-christ*, and his Crew suggest in this Case? Will you not, say these wicked Temptations, believe and follow the Doctrines and Practices of the Church of *Rome*, since they were held by such and such Holy Fathers, Great and Famous Men, knowing and learned Persons, even as your own Ministers do call them, and allow them to be, when they so frequently acquaint you with their sayings and sentences? The Truth is, the mystery of Iniquity hath operated in such Ages, in which divers of the alledged Authors never thought, nor imagined that this would be the dangerous consequence, of some Doctrines and Practices, which is said to have been fomented by them, or which they have let slip without good heed and attention, whereby they have unhappily promoted the ends, which the Spirit of *Anti-christ* hath propounded to himself, and has been effectually pursuing since their Decease: And after he is happily discovered, by the blessed Reformation, in the Protestant Churches, he works again under pretence of Antient and Holy Fathers misapplied by *Anti-christ*, and recommended by others, whether upon design, or otherwise, themselves best know. This prepares People to receive *Anti-christian* Errors, by being thus prejudiced and prepossessed with the Authority of such Writers, about their sentiments and sayings. But we know that from the times of the Apostles, the Mystery of Iniquity began to work, much more then six, or seven, or eight hundred years after, unto these last Ages. Therefore, I will reverence and receive Antiquity, so far as to keep my self free, for the Truth of the Word of God, without entertaining any thing that opposes it, or is inconsistent.

sistent with it. The great noise, that the venerable Names, and Titles of Saints, doth make, obstructs and hinders the propogating of the Truth, and helps rather unto the reception of Errors and Corruptions, and so much the more, that in the (4th) place such importunate and unseasonable Allegations of Antient Writers, vilify and decry the true solid and simple Preaching of the Word, and occasions a disdain, and a slighting of the Word of God among the Auditors, which are pleased and tickled with this vain sort of Preaching: For as the pure and simple Preaching of the Gospel, which is *the Power of God through faith unto salvation*, needs not such Allegations and specious Authority of Men, so it is to them that are Preachers of such Sermons, a sort of foolishness: And, by I know not what sort of contagion, their Auditors learn to despise the most faithful and learned followers of Christ his Preaching, and in a disdain to call them simple and silly Preachers; And from thence to take liberty to censure the most holy and sincere Sermons, which would edify them to the doing of good, and which would keep them from Corruption of Errors and Vice: But they superciliously condemn such plain Sermons as are not high enough, as they pretend, for their exalted Genius, which must be served with profound and deep Speculations. For they not only say it, but by their excessive Praises of these Men-pleasing Preachers, would make it thought by the vulgar, that they Preach to them high matters, and that the other Preachers cannot Preach so Learnedly and Politely, but only set forth some vulgar things, that most People know, and that in a homely dress. This turns to the manifest Contempt of the Holy Ministry in its pure and right discharge: but that which is worse, unto the prejudice of their own Edification,

fication, and of them that hear them, who are carried away by such vanity. For both the one and the other, profit not by the Instructions, which are drawn from the Word of God alone.

So in the 5th place, whilst that by such empty Allegations the time allotted, for the Exercise runneth out, the main things in the Text, Namely, the Instructions, Consolations, Exhortations, and Redargutions, which do lively flow from the Text, are not much, or not at all touched. And as heretofore the Mass pleased, because it did not bite; so such Preachers do please, because that Men are not much disturbed in their Carnal Pleasure or Profits, and but little awed with the tremendous Authority of the Sword of the Word, but are left in Security, by being accustomed to the feeble and unhallowed words of Men. For these reasons then, and others of the like nature, he that will Preach usefully, must avoid needless Allegations of Authors in his Preaching, even of those Authors who are called Fathers, Antient and Modern, but let him use them sparingly and with Judgment, lest he expose himself, Ministry and People, to the inconveniences above mentioned. Satan, with the Flesh and the World, and his principal Instrument and Tool, the Papal *Anti-christ*, hath many ways to hinder the Efficacious and Powerful Preaching of the Word. If he cannot hinder and abolish it altogether, or in part, he will endeavour to substitute in lieu thereof, specious Fables which will spoil all. And if he cannot do this, he will endeavour to mix with it impertinent things, and such as aim not principally at the weakening and the ruining of his Kingdom, but will in part serve to re-edify it. And yet if he cannot do this, he will endeavour to cause the Ministry to be despised and disesteemed, by one means, or other. So far then :

then as one can discern, that Satan would serve himself with any manner of Preaching unto such ends, he ought to be the more careful to avoid every thing that may give him any Advantage. But here some will say, if we do not alledge many Authors, we shall seem, according to the Calumnies of the Adversaries, to be Preachers of Novelty, and not to have Antiquity for us, especially if we Name not many Fathers. We Answer first, the Adversaries of Christianity accused our Lord, and his Apostles, and the Doctors and Teachers of the first Ages, of Novelty, because in their Sermons, they did not alledge many Authors, *Jews* and *Pagans*, but contented themselves mostly with Quoting the Prophets of the Old Testament, and afterwards the Writings of the New Testament. No wonder then we are accused of Novelty, because that in Preaching we do not Quote the Authors of corrupt Ages. It is enough that we alledge the Prophets, and Apostles, and the Doctors of the purest Antiquity, when we Judge it requisite. 2dly, That as in Disputes and Polemic Writings, and in the Controversie, the first Doctors of the Christian Church, convinced the *Jews* and *Phariseses*, by their own Antient and Modern Authors, so do we convince the *Papists*, as appears in the Disputes and Controversies in so many Books and Volumes, full of Citations, which not only the Adversaries, but also other People may see, that we are of no New Religion, as the *Papists* do accuse us. And, 3dly, Tho' for the said Reasons, we forbear much Citation of Authors, that we may keep entire the Authority of Scripture, yet we do sometimes alledge 'em, when it is needful, as hath been said.

If any object, that if we do not alledge the Antients, and the Fathers, our Sermons will not have that Authority upon our Auditors. We Answer, That our Lord in Preaching

Preached against the Antients that had corrupted the Law, hath had more Authority than those which Preach upon the Authority of the Antients. It is that which we see in the 5th, 6th, 7th, of Mat. It is said, Chapter 7. 28, 29. *That when Jesus had finished his Sermon on the Mount, the Multitude were astonished at his Doctrine; for he taught them as one having Authority, and not as the Scribes.* A Minister therefore that Preaches the Gospel by the Authority of the Lord Jesus, without alledging the Antients in every Paragraph, yea, in Preaching against Antient Corruptions, by the most Antient Sentences of the Holy Scripture, hath more Authority upon the Auditors Consciences, than others, who pretend to influence them by their allegations of Antient Authors. And truly, as David in divesting himself of his Royal habits, and putting on a plain Ephod, which was more suitable, unto an holy and humble marching before the Ark, was not dishonoured before the eyes of the People, as vain-glorious Michael objected. But, as he Answered her, that in rendering himself yet more vile and abject then at that time, and becoming more base in his own sight, he should be Honoured of the Persons of whom Michael had spoken: Likewise the faithful Ministers of Christ, not seeking the glory and applause of Men in conducting the Ark, by the pure and simple Preaching of the word, without Ostentation of Humane Wisdom and Learning, are not Dishonoured, but rather Honoured by the People, who have any respect unto the Word of God. And it is that which experience teacheth; for these Sermons have more Authority in Mens Consciences than those of other Men, who perhaps carry away some flight renown in the eyes of the World, who are more guided by fancy than by Conscience, which seeks the Honour of God. But those who

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are truly Conscientious, go to those Ministers, who press upon them the most simple and absolute Authority of the Word. And it is most memorable which we have from good hands, that a very Learned and Judicious Person being to Preach at Court, and before a great and a Wise King, Composed a very elaborate Sermon, with a great deal of Art, in that manner which might, according to Man, gain most applause: But not being able to satisfy his own Conscience, to deliver his Heavenly Lord's Errand in such a manner (no more than *David* with the Armour of *Saul*) he quite changed this method, and Composed his Sermon according to the simplicity of the Gospel, void of such Ostentation. It pleased the Lord that this had so great efficacy, that he came in favour with this great Prince, and so continued to Preach in this manner successfully, and was most esteemed and honoured by the greatest Personages. And, indeed, those who honour the Lord with a single heart, shall be honoured. Wherefore if one would gain holy awe and reverence amidst a People, and edify their Souls, he must press them with the Majesty and Authority of the Holy Scriptures. Indeed we may cite the Antients, especially before an Auditory newly come from Popery, and who are still stunned and amazed with the noise and rattle which they have heard of the Fathers, but we must have a great care not to nourish them in a dependance on Mens sayings and sentiments. For saving Faith cannot be built on humane Authorities; nor can we imagine to gain upon any, either in Publick, or Private Assemblies, a firm or solid Authority, any other way than by the Holy Scriptures. Again, if it be replied, but so doing, we shall neglect the reading of Authors, both Antient and Modern, and scarce improve in the study of good Learning; and by this means shall introduce Barbarism and Ignorance amongst us.

I. I Answer, This does not follow: For first, we must not alledge them, but to fit and convenient ends. It follows indeed, that one must read them with so much the more attention, for to alledge them when it is needful.

2dly, We must read Authors for to know and discern true Christianity, how, where, and when it hath been, either revived, preserved, or corrupted, and particularly by what degrees, and what progress it hath made in the World and in the Church: So also to discern how *Antichristianism* came and sprung up, how it hath been hatched and nourished, what have been the degrees and progresses of it, and what have been the Subtilties and Persecutions of this Bastardly Brood.

3dly, For to see the Conformity of the true Christian, and truly reformed Churches, with the Primitive and most pure antiquity.

In the 4th Place, we must read them with great diligence, to serve our selves in necessary and unavoidable (if we will be faithful unto our Lord) Disputations and Controversies.

And in the 5th Place, we must read them to help us to understand the Scriptures; for tho' we must not make a noise with 'em, lest we seem to withdraw from the Authority of Scripture, yet we must profit by them, and appropriate that which they have better spoken, to the clearer and better applying of edifying subjects. As in Building the Temple of *Solomon* (as we read, 1 *Kings* 6. v. 7.) The stones were cut out and fitted else-where, so that there was neither Hammer, nor Axe, nor any Tool of Iron heard in the House while it was in Building: So in Building up the People of God (who are the Lively stones) we must do it by the Word of God, without the noise of instruments, of Arts and Sciences, or of such Authors of
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which one hath served himself in his study, where he ought to prepare and fit the whole, by the help of such Instruments as he is furnished withal. St. Paul himself had read *Greek Authors*, and was acquainted with their Poets, *Aratus, Menander, and Epimenides*, but he made no Ostentation of this kind of Learning, nor does he Name his Authors; but says only in general, *As some of the Poets have said*, Act. 17. 28. And again, *as one of themselves, even a Prophet of their own hath said*, speaking of the Christians unto Titus. Chap. 1. 12. And in 1 Cor. 15. 33. He recites only the sentence without referring to any Author. And we find but these three Quotations in all his Epistles.

For these Reasons, he that will faithfully Preach the Word of God, must avoid needless and tedious Quotations of Authors, and the enticing Words of Man's Wisdom. We must Preach Jesus Christ, and the Mysteries of his Gospel, *Not in the Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual*, 1 Cor. 2. 13. When we Preach by the Scriptures, and in the simplicity of the Language of the Holy Ghost, we Accomodate our selves to the Capacity of our Auditors, who are able to try our Doctrine by the Scriptures, which they have in their hands, and shou'd have continually dwelling in their Hearts, *Neh. 8. v. 3, 8.* As *Ezra* and the *Levites* read and expounded the Book of the Law, to those that were returned from the *Babylonish Captivity*, so must we instruct the Captives of sin and mystical *Babylon*, out of the Holy Scriptures, which contain that Truth; which alone can make 'em free.

Now he that wou'd receive more particular directions about the right way of Preaching, may read (besides Authors of our own, who have treated on this subject) *St. Austin* of the *Christian Doctrine*, especially his *Fourth Book*.

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